

The
Rebirth of
Protestantism
in
Europe

By
Elmer T. Clark

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THE REBIRTH
OF PROTESTANTISM
IN EUROPE

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THE REBIRTH OF PROTESTANTISM IN EUROPE

BY
ELMER T. CLARK



GENERAL SUNDAY SCHOOL BOARD
DEPARTMENT OF MISSIONARY EDUCATION
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

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BY ELMER T. CLARK

Foreword

The Sunday schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have undertaken the support of our missions in Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. We will, therefore, relate Europe as a mission field to our missionary education program through monthly missionary programs and lesson materials. The money necessary for the maintenance of the work in Europe will be raised by the regular collections on these missionary Sundays as provided in the Discipline of the Church. This European enterprise will take the place of the Centenary payments in the local Sunday school, as all individual Sunday school pledges have been merged into a Conference adjusted balance.

This book is issued to provide up-to-date information for all the schools. It will be of special value to pastors, superintendents, and teachers in preparing necessary material for missionary lessons and programs. It is in simple and popular form and adapted for use in almost any group. Its twelve chapters correspond to the twelve missionary Sundays of the year.

All Sunday school workers are urged to make a large use of this book. Employ its information in the devotional exercises on the missionary days, in programs, posters and bulletin boards. Place a copy in the hands of each officer, teacher, and older pupil. Use it as a textbook in the organized classes. Make sure that its data permeates the whole school. We are undertaking the most ambitious program of missionary education ever attempted in our Church and the utmost cooperation of every Sunday school worker is earnestly asked.

ED. F. COOK,
Secretary, Department of Missionary Education, General Sunday School Board.



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I. Is Europe a Mission Field?

Is it necessary or advisable for American Methodism to undertake missionary work in Europe? This question has doubtless occurred to many Americans who are familiar with the general culture of European nations. In art, music, and architecture these nations surpass all others. Their universities are the greatest in the world, and they excel in science, philosophy, and diplomacy. They have even made remarkable contributions to theology. The visitor will see everywhere the external signs of religion: mighty cathedrals, icons and relics, pictures of saints, multitudes passing in and out of the churches, the streets swarming with priests. He is likely to obtain the impression that Europe is very religious—with a very poor brand of religion, much mixed with superstition and exploitation of the ignorant, but nevertheless a religion that has Christ in it. When such a person is told that American Methodism is sending missionaries to these countries he is quite likely to question the wisdom of the procedure.

But the visitor has a very superficial view. If he could live among these people and understand them, if he could learn all about the social and religious situation in most of the continental nations, he would certainly conclude that Europe is the most important and strategic Protestant mission field in the world.

1. If it is the mission of Methodism to serve where suffering abounds, then the Church can scarcely resist the call of Europe, for here is the world's center of misery, agony, and grief.

In the World War seven and a half million European men were killed and eighteen and a half million others were wounded. France lost in killed and wounded more men than the United States ever had in her whole army, while Russia lost twice as many. Indeed, Europe had nearly twice as many men killed in the World War as were

killed in all the wars of the world from the Napoleonic outbreak in 1790, to the close of the last Balkan War in 1913.

This meant millions of orphans, millions of widows, grief unspeakable, depths of agony never plumbed before in the history of the race.

The direct cost of the World War, exclusive of all loans, was one hundred eighty-seven billion dollars, and all of this save twenty-three billions was spent by Europe. The indirect cost, in the destruction of property and labor, was nearly twice that stupendous sum. That war cost, in actual cash spent, five times as much as all the wars which ravaged Europe between 1790 and 1914.

This meant homeless millions, starvation, pauperism, crime, disease, and misery unspeakable.

These wounds have not yet healed. Central Europe is still a veritable cesspool of misery and despair. If the consolation of a spiritual religion were ever needed by any people, it is needed today by these Europeans. If the Church should go where misery abounds, it cannot neglect these war-torn lands.

2. A new European social order is rising out of the wreckage of the old. Poland, Czechoslovakia, Jugoslavia, and others are new nations. They have been picked up from the debris of a demolished continent. They have broken with the past and are now establishing their governments and building a civilization. Russia, Germany, Austria, and other countries have also broken with the past and are establishing their governments on new foundations.

The question now arises: What elements will go into these new social structures? Shall they be shot through and through with atheism, suspicion, hatred, materialism? Or shall they be permeated with the spirit of Christ, justice,

and love? It depends upon American Protestantism. Left alone, these nations will be materialistic and atheistic to the core. Roman Catholicism will not help them. Their own Protestant groups cannot help them. The only possible source of idealism and religion for these struggling lands is the Protestantism of America. We must see to it, for the future security of the world, that Christian principles are woven into the warp and woof of the fabric of reconstructed European social life.

3. Europe dominates most of the world, especially the heathen world. European nations are the overlords of Africa and most of Asia, and they thereby control the commerce, education, and, in large degree, the social and intellectual life of the subordinate peoples. In this situation it is manifestly impossible to win the heathen lands for Protestantism while their masters remain Catholic or atheistic. The essential step to the thorough Christianization of the non-Christian countries is the evangelization of Europe.

4. The brainiest and best people of continental Europe are deserting the Roman Catholic Church because of its superstitions and political pretensions. These persons do not, however, become Protestants, for they do not know what Protestantism really is. They embrace atheism, and in Europe today hundreds of thousands acknowledge no God and no religion. In Italy alone, the very center of Catholicism, a million and a half people register in the census as atheists or without religion, while all the Protestants in the kingdom number only 125,000. "It will sound strange, but nevertheless it is true," says Rev. J. L. Neill, superintendent of the Methodist Mission in Czechoslovakia, "that most of the best people I know in Central Europe are without religion."

In Russia the government has officially declared war on God and is systematically stamping out all forms of religious faith. This contagion is spreading. What will be the final outcome if this drift continues and Europe, with its strength and world-influence, becomes thoroughly atheistic? It would mean a plunge into barbarism. This situation imperatively demands the preaching of the Protestant gospel and the evangelization of these lands that know nothing of a vital and dynamic faith.

5. This leads us to the fact that spiritual religion is almost unknown in continental Europe. The people for the most part have no conception of a personal relationship between men and God. They have mighty cathedrals but no Christ. As a prominent Belgian official expressed it: "Christ for me has always been a very thin man nailed to a cross with a bleeding heart where the stomach ought to be. When you see crowds going to a shrine, when you look at their stupid faces, hear the clatter of their chaplets, with a bunch of medals, like horses in chains, and listen to them repeating unceasingly the same words they call prayer, one feels proud not to have such a religion."

Bishop Beauchamp tells of persons in cultured European circles who never had a Bible in their hands. A petition sent to him from Little White Russia recited as follows: "The Greek Church has lost its influence owing to events in Russia. It was largely a political agency of the Russian government. The Roman Church is being used among us in the same way. We do not want politics in our religion; we want vital spiritual truth. We want teaching founded on holy Scripture and not a religion materialized into ceremonies and adoration of relics."

The simple truth is that Central Europe has no religion. It has culture a-plenty. It swarms with priests, with their

idols, superstitions, and impostures. But religion such as we know—a living faith in a living Christ and the personal touch of the soul with God—is practically unknown. Are we not called to preach Christ to those who do not know him?

6. The religion of Christ in Europe is the only hope of the world's peace. This section of the world has had a war every fifty or one hundred years—sometimes every few years—since the dawn of history. Diplomacy has been impotent and will always be. Disarmament alone will not insure peace here, for these people fought even when they had no arms.

European wars are caused by suspicion and hatred. The people hate each other! French hate Germans and their enmity is cordially returned. Magyars hate Slavs and the Slavs hate both Magyars and Germans. So long as this state of affairs exists Europe will be a powder house likely at any moment to explode. This attitude must be changed before peace will be a certainty.

Can any force save religion change hatred into love? Only Christ. Real religion can make a Slav love a Magyar and a Frenchman cooperate with a German in keeping the peace. And unless these sullen and suspicious people can experience a regeneration of attitude the world has before it only the awful prospect of constantly recurring strife. If Catholicism could change character the lion and the lamb would long since have lain down together on the continent of Europe. But there is demanded a faith more vital than any that Romanism has to offer. Protestantism must evangelize Europe or it will remain unevangelized.

These are compelling reasons for our service to the stricken peoples of continental Europe. The fields wherein the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, labors

are Belgium, Poland, and Czechoslovakia, nations wherein Methodism has no other representative and where a remarkable success has already crowned our efforts. Every consideration urges us to press onward in giving the gospel to these nations, for unless we evangelize them they will not be evangelized.

The native Protestant groups cannot meet the situation. They have no strength, no influence, no passion; the fact that when persons leave Romanism they never think of becoming Protestants is proof that these groups cannot check the drift toward atheism. "I am frank to say," writes Rev. J. L. Neill, "that I had just as soon be a Roman Catholic in central Europe as a member of any of the larger Protestant groups, so far as spiritual power is concerned. There are some smaller bodies, such as the Waldensians, Huguenots, Moravians, and others which maintain spirituality, but they are not a drop in the great ocean of European life. The greatest disappointment I ever met was concerning European Protestantism. I expected to find a struggling, faithful group, dying for lack of funds, but still imbued with the sacrificial spirit of Huss and Savonarola. Instead, I found a Protestantism that had been dead for two generations. It was not Roman Catholicism that announced to the world that Jesus was not the son of God—that the Bible was a collection of folk-lore. It was European Protestantism. It did not die for lack of funds, but for lack of faith in God. My humble opinion is that every dollar given to so-called European Protestantism is worse than wasted. Gold cannot bring back a sense of God. Repentance and a pure faith are Europe's needs."

II. King Albert's Country

Belgium is a very small country of western Europe. On the east lies Germany, to the south and west is France, while Holland lies on the north. In size Belgium is smaller than our State of Maryland, but it has a population of more than seven and a half millions. It is the most densely populated nation of Europe. Lying as it does between the traditional enemies, France and Germany, Belgium has been the battle ground of Europe; the armies of many lands have tramped across her soil and on her fields some of the greatest battles of history have been fought. Here Caesar fought in his Gallic Wars; here Napoleon met his Waterloo; here, at Liege, Namur, and Mons, the Germans were checked until the allied armies were mobilized and civilization was thus saved.

Belgium is a constitutional monarchy ruled by King Albert, his Prime Minister, ten departmental Ministers, a Senate, and a Chamber of Representatives. Anciently the land belonged to Spain, but near the beginning of the nineteenth century it became a part of the Netherlands, or Holland. It became an independent and neutral nation in 1830.

The country is divided into ten provinces, as follows: Antwerp (or Anvers), Brabant, East Flanders, West Flanders, Hainaut, Liege, Limbourg, Luxembourg, Namur, and Eupen and Malmedy, the last of which was ceded to Belgium at the close of the World War. The capital city is Brussels, which, with its suburbs, has a population of more than three-quarters of a million. Other important cities are Antwerp, Liege, Ghent, Mechlin (or Malines), Borgerhout, Bruges, Ostend, Verviers, Louvain, Seraing, Courtrai, Tournai, Alost, St. Nicolas, Namur, Mons, Jumet, Charleroi, Lierre, and Ypres.

Belgium has four great universities, Louvain, Brussels, Liege, and Ghent, and a good system of fine arts, technical, normal, and public schools. In 1900, nearly one-third of all the people were unable to read and write but rapid progress has been made in education of late years. The Belgians are for the most part a cultured people and magnificent libraries, cathedrals, art galleries, and palaces are found in her various cities. The country has produced many famous artists, among them being Rubens and Van Dyck; Ysae, the violinist, and Maeterlinck, the author, are likewise Belgians.

This country has two official languages—Flemish and French—the number of those speaking the former slightly predominating. The Flemish element occupy the northern provinces and are kin to the Dutch, while the French-speaking people occupy the southern provinces near France and are known as Walloons.

Belgium bore the brunt of the World War and suffered terribly. The country was treacherously overrun in the first days of the conflict and the enemy occupied practically the whole territory for the entire duration of the war, the King and government being forced to flee to Havre, in France. Many Belgian cities and towns were devastated by the Germans; in Ypres, for example, scarcely a building was left standing. The work of reconstruction has proceeded rapidly; 40,000 houses and 350 public buildings have been rebuilt and 250 temporary structures have been erected for schools and offices. These cost seventeen and a half billion francs, a sum equal to about \$3,500,000,000 at the par value of the franc.

This huge expenditure made a severe strain upon the treasury of so small a country, and since Germany has defaulted in her reparation payments Belgium is heavily

burdened. Her public debt has been steadily increasing since the war and is now forty billion francs. To make bad matters worse, her annual expenses are nearly two billion francs above her income and her imports exceed her exports by nearly four billion francs a year. In spite of the disparity in the size and population of the two countries, the Belgian army is as large as that of the United States.

Religious toleration prevails in Belgium and the country even goes so far as to pay a part of the income of ministers of all denominations from the public treasury. But the King must be a member of the Catholic Church and the vast majority of the people who profess any religion are Roman Catholics. The statistics of 1920 showed only 21 Protestant pastors and 15 Jewish rabbis in the whole country, while there were 6,000 Roman Catholic priests, 25,000 monks and nuns, 200 Catholic deaneries, 3,700 Catholic churches, and 17 Catholic seminaries. Before the war the government appropriated about seven million francs per year to Roman Catholic enterprises and only 120,000 francs per year to those of all other religious bodies.

This solidly Catholic complexion of Belgium is a direct product of the Spanish Inquisition. While the country belonged to Spain the Spanish rulers demanded allegiance to Catholic orthodoxy. But when the Protestant Reformation broke out in Europe the ideas of the reformers were welcomed by the choicest spirits of Belgium. Vast audiences gathered to hear the messages of the preachers and two-thirds of the Flemish people accepted the truths they proclaimed. If left alone, Belgium would have become a Protestant nation.

But she was not left alone. The Spanish tyrants determined to crush the aspiration for religious liberty, and they did crush it. John Voes and Henry Van

Esschen were burned at the stake in 1523, these two Belgians being the first martyrs of the Reformation. The Protestant hero, Guy de Bray, was executed in 1567. The King of Spain sent the infamous Duke of Alva to Belgium and gave this monster a free hand in putting down the "heretics." Alva later boasted that he had murdered 18,000 of them, and the total number of victims was 100,000. The Protestants were hunted down and killed, banished, or silenced. The Inquisition was at its worst here and the persecution was successful. Protestantism was nipped in the bud and Roman Catholicism fastened firmly on the people by means of the sword and faggot. This is one of the few instances in history where persecution has been able to almost wholly throttle the movement for liberty of conscience.

But Catholicism in Belgium, as in France and Italy, is a dead and superstitious formality among the common people and a veneer among the upper classes. The people are forsaking it, and well-informed persons assert that it has lost its grip on half the people. These people have not become Protestants but have forsaken religion entirely and call themselves atheists, meaning not that they deny God but that they have no religious faith. This class is rapidly increasing and is being recruited from the most intelligent men and women of the country. The call of Belgium to Protestantism is not to oppose the Roman Catholic Church, but to save from infidelity the vast multitude who acknowledge no faith and to interpret to Belgian social life the liberal and spiritual values of the real gospel of Christ.

III. Methodism Among the Belgians

The Missionary Centenary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was launched in the midst of the World War and service to the stricken nations of Europe loomed large in its program as outlined by the noted Committee of One Hundred and officially adopted by the General Conference of 1918. The sum of five million dollars was written into the budget for European reconstruction.

At that time no man knew what was involved in the term "reconstruction." But immediately after the Centenary campaign a delegation was despatched to Europe to "spy out the land" and recommend a course of procedure. This delegation went with a similar company from the northern branch of Methodism, and their joint studies and deliberations resulted in a division of the fields among the two Churches so as to prevent competition and overlapping. The Board of Missions in 1919, heard the report of this delegation and resolved to enter Belgium at once. An appropriation of \$250,000 from the Centenary funds was accordingly made and a new deputation was named to actively launch the work.

On the basis of the careful investigations already made Methodism was soon on the ground in Belgium. Its preliminary activities were in the nature of relief work, but it was early seen that our occupation of the country must be long continued and efforts were accordingly made to secure permanent property strategically located. In Uccle, a suburb of Brussels, the entire property of a leading boys' school was purchased for a Methodist Orphanage, and within a few months it was in operation caring for a large number of Belgian children. Another beautiful building was purchased and a boarding school for girls established; this school, "Les Marrionniers," is the only school of its kind in

Belgium and has been filled to capacity almost from the day of its founding.

In the very heart of Brussels a great building was purchased as headquarters for our general activities and this has become the recognized center of Protestantism in Belgium. Offices and living quarters for our workers were arranged, class rooms and auditoriums were fitted up, and a publication department was installed for the production of Christian literature, unknown in that country. Rev. W. G. Thonger became the editor, and colporteurs went into every province of Belgium distributing Bibles, tracts, and religious books among the people.

Our Church united with the native Protestants in purchasing and maintaining a hospital and nurses' school in Brussels. This hospital has fifty beds and was the instrument of a large service in the crisis at the close of the war and still carries on its merciful ministry.

In the war-scarred areas relief stations and social centers were immediately set up. In Ypres, the people had straggled back to their ruined homes. The government had hastily constructed sheds and flimsy structures of every kind to shelter the homeless thousands while the work of reconstruction went on. In the midst of this building activity and the mass of humanity so rudely sheltered our Church purchased property and began a relief work which later developed into a full-fledged Methodist Church.

In Menin and Lille the situation was much the same, and here also our workers entered with relief stations. As an experiment an evangelistic campaign was launched in Verviers, and the success was such that a similar campaign was projected in Brussels and the average attendance at the revival services was nearly fifteen hundred each night.

At Herstal, a part of the city of Liege, our workers were invited by the leaders of the industrial element, a group which has utterly broken away from and become antagonistic to Catholicism and embraced a form of atheistic Socialism and is, therefore, unusually difficult to reach, and here we have secured a large congregation and developed an interesting social service work and an English night school. At Molenbeek, near Brussels, we have gone into a similar situation and have a Church with preaching in both French and Flemish, two schools conducted in these two languages, and a social center of large proportions. A mission for sailors was founded at Antwerp, coupled with a colportage station, and miracles of grace have been wrought among the rough seamen.

While these enterprises were being launched the need for war relief work decreased and the opportunity of evangelism arose among the people we had been serving. Preachers toured the country conducting revivals in tents or rented halls and most of these meetings resulted in the establishment of permanent Churches. Literature was distributed in increasing volume; two Methodist publications were established, Wesley's Sermons and various Methodist books were translated and published, and the Gospels were scattered broadcast. A constant stream of similar literature, numbering many thousands each month, now goes into the hands of people who never before had the opportunity of reading such.

The first session of the Belgian Mission was held in Brussels by Bishop W. B. Beauchamp in August, 1922, and at that time our Church was officially organized. We then had eight pastoral charges, eight regular missionary workers, ten colporteurs and evangelists, and two hundred members, all of whom were received on probation.

Since that time the growth of Methodism in Belgium has been steady, its influence, service, and importance being far greater than the actual membership indicates. Our membership is about 1,200, including probationers, and there are 20 Sunday schools training 600 boys and girls. We have 16 pastoral charges and the services are conducted in French, Flemish, and English. Our institutions, mentioned above, include the following: (1) Central Building at Brussels, with offices, French and English Churches, English school, Bible and Evangelistic Training School, and publishing plant; (2) "Les Marrionniers," a girls' school at Uccle, with an enrollment of 100; (3) Orphanage at Brussels with 50 children; (4) Hospital at Brussels; (5) Schools and Social Centers at Herstal and Molenbeek; (6) Mission for Sailors at Antwerp; (7) Churches at Brussels, Uccle, Molenbeek, Antwerp, Herstal, Dunkirk, Aerschot, Diest, Boitsfort, Ypres, Malines, Comines, Wevelghem, Ghlin, Ecausines, Hoboken, and Stockel.

Our first worker in Belgium was Dr. D. A. Sloan, who served from 1919 to 1924. It has never been necessary to maintain a large American missionary force in Europe, for our converts are well equipped and we have, therefore, been able to develop an efficient native staff. There are fourteen preachers in the mission and only two are Americans, while seventeen of the twenty teachers in our three schools are native Belgians. In addition to these our present force includes nine colporteurs and seven employed workers, all of whom are Belgians. The ease with which we have manned our work with trained and efficient native leaders is the most encouraging fact in connection with this mission; it indicates that Methodism in this country will ere long be able to stand alone.

IV. Heart Throbs from Belgium

Recently one of the most distinguished lawyers of Brussels, an attorney for the Belgian government, was converted in our French Church in the capital city. He was a noted and educated man, and his religious awakening was deep and genuine. Our pastor, Rev. W. G. Wilmot, coveted this influential man as a lay preacher to his people. He wrote urging him to become a local preacher in our Church. The great attorney declined, for the time being, on unique grounds. Read these extracts from his letter:

"I don't feel fit as yet for such an enterprise. I have not enough knowledge of God's truth. It is not enough to feel deeply; there must be another element; knowledge of texts, facts, history, even a little theology. Christianity for you has always been something intimate. I have passed my life without knowing a word of it. Christ for me has always been a very thin man nailed to a cross, or a picture with a bleeding heart where the stomach ought to be.

"That is the tragedy of being born in a Catholic, pagan country, as in Belgium. When you see crowds going to Oosbacher (a shrine), when you look at their stupid faces, hear the clatter of their 'chaplets,' with a bunch of medals, like horses with their chains in a cavalry regiment, and listen to them repeating unceasingly the same words they call prayer—well, one feels more or less proud not to have such a religion.

"Two years ago, having been ill for a few weeks, I read the history of philosophy, and being unable to make a choice between systems, I threw the book to the other end of the room in despair. I tried the Unitarians, or Protestant Liberal Church, but it's only a philosophy. Then there was a dreadful period of darkness; I had lost even my belief in philosophy. I had tried once or twice to go to the Catholic Church, but it was useless. There was no God for me there.

"Then I met you, and the Rue du Champ de Mars (Methodist headquarters). Through you the Spirit at last spoke to me. I saw Christ in his real, actual, living sense. I felt bitterly how many years I had lost in vain struggle, in hopeless searching. But I knew I had at last come home, and there was now rest and a new life for me. Need I say how deeply thankful I am to you?"

Among the rough sailors and the habitues of the disreputable section of Antwerp labors Mrs. Esselbach-Whiting, a colporteur of the Methodist Mission, with her little gospel van filled with Bibles, tracts, and Christian books. With an apostolic zeal and utterly oblivious to the discomforts, dangers, and insults, she lives and moves among the lowest dives of Europe and has achieved some remarkable conversions through the distribution of literature; the market people call her "Mother;" she calls herself "a market woman for Jesus."

"The work on the big market at Antwerp is very interesting," she declared. "Every Saturday the gospel van is brought on the market by destitute sailors, who receive tickets for food and lodging in return. If one or two helpers come to sing we have splendid meetings, often two hundred listening to the old, old story. Many books, Bibles, Testaments, and gospel tracts are sold. Often someone will come to mock and dispute, but God gives the Word to answer, and in this way Satan defeats himself, and we have a still larger crowd to listen and buy books. When I am alone it is more difficult—sometimes there is a man opposite playing on harmonica and singing street songs, on my left a man with a gramophone, and, on my right a vendor of cigars shouting and doing his best to attract attention.

"When I visit the country markets I hire a table from a neighboring cafe (saloon) and spread my books out. Some-

times I sell well; at other places they seem afraid to buy, having evidently been warned not to buy 'those bad books.' The cafes (saloons) and fairs are also visited with Testaments, gospels, and tracts.

"One evening a man in a cafe said to me: 'If I buy your books will they be mascots for these young ladies (some gay young girls who were with him)? Will they bring them good luck?' I replied: 'If they read the books and follow the teaching they will bring them the best luck and happiness that abides.'

"I go sometimes to a street full of licensed houses of ill fame, and as I go in and out among our poor sisters one would scarcely understand their eagerness to receive my books that condemn their lives, and yet they call me to their door and run after me to get a New Testament or a gospel.

"I hold Flemish gospel meetings twice weekly. Our people are mostly poor, some come without hats or bonnets, some can neither read nor write, but they come, cold or rain or snow. From this little band of poor but faithful people has been organized the first Flemish Methodist Church in Antwerp."

One of our preachers and most successful evangelists is Frank Van Den Wijngaert, a young man who was converted by reading the New Testament while wounded in an army hospital.

One day this young soldier fell upon the field of battle with a wound that at the time was regarded as fatal, and was carried away from the battle front to the hospital. When after many days, he regained consciousness, he asked the nurse to bring him the scrap of blood-stained paper which had been found clasped in his hand. It was a fragment of the fourteenth chapter of the Gospel of St. John.

Lying upon his bed in the hospital Frank Van Den Wijngaert read again the words on the paper, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one cometh unto the Father but by me. Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do." The wounded soldier asked for the book from which this extract had been taken. And by pondering the message of the Gospel as he lay upon his hospital cot, he learned of a certainty that Jesus is "the Way, the Truth and the Life," for Christ spoke peace to his soul and led him into an experience of personal salvation.

After the war he went back to Brussels, joined the Methodist Mission, and entered our Bible School. He was made an exhorter and then a local preacher. He pitched his tent at Wevelghem, a few miles from Ypres, where he had seen war service, and declared the way of life where he had seen so much of death. Out of this tent campaign on the border of that famous battlefield was developed the Methodist Church of Ypres.

The evangelist proceeded to Aerschot, near Mons, another city in the heart of the war zone. Here he met much opposition. Romanists and "roughnecks" tried to break up his meeting. He was pelted with eggs, stones, sticks, and decayed vegetables. But with undaunted courage this soldier faced the mobs, overcame all opposition, and gained a great victory, founding his second permanent Methodist Church, of which he became the pastor.

And so throughout the length and breadth of Belgium goes Frank Van Den Wijngaert, soldier of Christ and country, preaching the Way, the Truth, and the Life. Unlearned in books and theology, as yet a mere babe in the interpretation of Scripture, he nevertheless knows Christ and preaches him in an appealing way to his people.

V. Poland, Pioneer of Democracy

Poland is a new republic created as a result of the World War from territory which was anciently Polish but which for more than a century had been incorporated in the powerful empires of Germany, Russia, and Austria. The nation is bounded on the west and north by Germany, on the north by Latvia and Lithuania, on the west by Russia and Ukraine, on the south by Roumania and Czechoslovakia. It is slightly smaller than Germany, being about the size of our State of Montana. The population, which is about twenty-seven million, is a conglomerate of eighteen million Poles and Slavs, three million Jews, and large numbers of Ruthenians, Germans, Lithuanians, Russians, and other nationalities.

Poland is divided into the city of Warsaw, the capital, and sixteen counties. Most of the people, 75 per cent of the whole population, live in the rural sections and 65 per cent of them are farmers. The country produces large quantities of coal and other minerals and extensive industries, such as textile mills and sugar refineries, flourish in the industrial centers of Warsaw, Lodz, Cracow, Dabrowa, Katowice, and Czestochowa. Poland has several large cities, the most important being Warsaw, the capital (population, 940,000), Lodz (455,000), Lwow (formerly Lemberg, 220,000), Cracow (180,000), Poznan (or Posen, 170,000), and Wilno (or Vilna, 130,000).

Poland is an ancient country and has an authentic history running back to the eighth century. It was an independent nation until the end of the eighteenth century, and during the seventeenth century was one of the most powerful states of Europe. Lying in close proximity to Germany, its existence was constantly threatened by the warlike Teutons and Polish soil was the scene of innumerable wars and bloodshed.

This country was the pioneer of modern democracy, for in a day when autocracy was prevalent and accepted everywhere Poland had a Parliament composed of two houses which elected the king and defined his duties. Powerful neighbors looked askance at this democratic tendency and resolved to put an end to it, and in doing so they put an end to Poland. In 1772, Prussia, Russia, and Austria each took a slice of Polish territory. In 1792 the same powers again made war upon the Poles and annexed additional provinces. A revolution then broke out which ended in the fatal battle of October 10, 1794, when the Prussians and Russians butchered 15,000 Poles and extinguished Polish national life by partitioning the remaining territory among the three allies.

For a hundred and twenty-five years the Poles were thus under the heels of Germany, Russia, and Austria. Napoleon befriended them and erected a small portion of their territory into the tiny Duchy of Warsaw, but at the infamous Congress of Vienna in 1815, the various powers of Europe nullified the procedure and again divided Poland among her old conquerors. In 1830, 1848, and 1863, the Poles made ineffectual attempts to regain their liberty, each revolution being put down with terrible ruthlessness.

The enslaved people saw their opportunity when the World War broke out. They fought first with Russia, then with Germany, seeking always the course which would restore their independence. The Germans and Austrians invaded Russian Poland and occupied the whole country. Outrages rivalling those committed by the Turks in Armenia were perpetrated upon these Poles and the country was terribly devastated.

As a matter of policy the German and Austrian emperors proclaimed Polish independence on November 5,

1916, but no boundaries were defined and no form of government established. A Provisional Council of Poles assembled but was unable to draft a constitution. In September, 1917, a Regency Council of three members was formed and another Council of State summoned, but a year later this body was dissolved. In October, 1918, a Constituent Assembly met, on November 9th the independence of Poland was officially proclaimed, and on June 28, 1919, this independence was recognized in the Treaty of Versailles.

Poland became a Republic, governed by a President, Prime Minister, nine departmental Ministers, and the Sejm, or Parliament, consisting of a Diet and Senate, the members of which are elected by vote of the people of both sexes. A dozen or more political parties sprang up, their strength being denoted by the members of each in the Diet in 1922: National Christian Union, 171; Radical Peasants, 60; Moderate Peasants, 43; Polish Socialists, 41; Jews, 35; Ukrainians, 24; National Labor, 18; Germans, 17; Polish Peasants, 17; White Ruthenians, 11; Communists, 2; others, 5. The existence of such political groups shows the difficulties being experienced by Poland in unifying the national life and harmonizing the various racial elements of the polyglot population.

The country has other difficulties. The recovery from the ruin of the war involved heavy burdens for a people without a government. The financial situation was chaotic and desperate. The Polish mark, the old unit of currency, declined until it was valueless, and a new unit—called the zloty and equal in value to a gold franc, or about twenty cents—was created. In 1924 the internal indebtedness of Poland was 61,485,871,287,603 Polish marks—an inconceivable number—while vast sums were owed to other nations—\$186,500,000 to the United States alone.

Poland is still in danger; indeed it has been necessary to defend its independence against Russia since the World War. A quarter of a million men are kept under arms. In the national budget of 1924, 440,900,000 zlotys were allotted to the Ministry of War, while the Ministry of Education received only 105,800,000 zlotys.

The Poles have always been a cultured people, with a deep appreciation of spiritual values. They are the best linguists of the world. They produced the patriots Pulaski and Kosciuszko, who fought with Washington for American independence, as well as Chopin, Paderewski, Josef Hoffman, and Sembrich, the musicians. In literature they gave us Sienkiewicz, author of "Quo Vadis," Joseph Conrad, great novelist, Sarbiewski, translator of the Bible, and Peter Skarga, great writer and preacher. Copernicus was a Pole, and so is Madam Curie, the discoverer of radium. Poland had the first free hospital in the world. The great Polish University of Cracow was founded in 1364, the second in Europe, and it has 5,000 students today. The University of Wilno was established in 1578 and that of Lwow in 1661. The University of Warsaw has nearly 10,000 students and is one of the greatest in Europe.

There is no established Church and all denominations are supposed to enjoy equal rights, a theory which, as we shall see, is not carried out in practice. The constitution, however, declares Roman Catholicism to be the dominant religion (Art. 117), and the great majority of the people profess that faith. There are more than 8,000 Roman Catholic priests in Poland. The Greek Catholic Church has an archbishop, two bishops, 2,500 priests and 3,300 Churches. Since the war the Russian Orthodox Church has established an Exarchate in Warsaw. There are about 600 Protestant Churches of every kind.

VI. Methodism Among the Poles

When the delegations from the Centenary Commission and the Board of Missions visited Europe in 1919, they were appalled at the destitution and suffering in Poland. The ruined country was not able to provide sustenance for its people, and hundreds of thousands of women and children were homeless, freezing, and starving. Words could not possibly picture the distress. Vast droves of children huddled in the streets and alleys of the cities, living on the crumbs they could beg or steal, while other multitudes ran wild in the fields and woods, subsisting on roots and refuse. When relief agencies gathered multitudes of these children in pens they died by thousands, and workers reported that large numbers had famished until their emaciated bodies had become so twisted that they could scarcely be recognized as human beings.

Adding to the general misery were thousands of Poles who were driven out of Russia by the Bolshevik army and came trooping into Poland. Large numbers of students came out of Russia, hoping by some means to continue their education at the Polish universities, and these were starving and freezing like the general rabble on the street. The Methodist delegation hastened back to America to organize a relief service to save these dying multitudes.

On February 24, 1920, the Board of Missions met in special session and voted half a million dollars for relief and missionary work in Poland and Czechoslovakia. A committee of persons already in Europe was organized to set up an organization and Rev. George W. Twynham, of the Western Virginia Conference, and Rev. Josef Dobes, of Temple, Texas, a native Czech, sailed as the first Methodist workers in these two countries.

The Board of Missions authorized a special Polish Relief Movement to secure clothes for shipment to Poland. Miss Daisy Davies became executive secretary of the Polish Relief, and an appeal was made through the woman's missionary societies for articles of every kind. The response was remarkable; the energetic labors of the women enabled the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to perform the greatest relief service of its history.

Within a brief space Methodists of the South shipped to Poland more than 8,000 bales and packages containing 975,000 garments, 62,000 pairs of shoes, and 37,000 cakes of soap, materials valued at approximately two million dollars. In addition to these supplies, \$17,000 in cash was contributed by individuals, missionary societies, and Churches.

This shipment reached Warsaw and was received by our workers. Relief centers were set up in various parts of the country. Three soup kitchens were established to feed starving students of the University of Warsaw and the Polytechnic University. Orphanages were opened at Grochow, Klarysew, and Mory, and these housed two hundred boys who were turned over to our workers by the Polish government. Other centers for relief work and clothing distribution were opened at Lwow, Crakow, Teschen, Poznan, and Wilno.

Through this speedy and efficient relief service our Church succeeded in saving the lives of multiplied thousands of the Polish people. Their gratitude was unbounded. The Polish government voiced the grateful sentiments of the people and letters of appreciation were received from Prince Ludomyrski of the Polish embassy, from the headquarters of the Polish Relief in New York, and from the War Department of the United States government.

When the need for physical relief became less our workers proceeded to consolidate their work into permanent institutions. Several day schools were established at Warsaw for the thousands of homeless children upon the streets. Orphanages and schools were developed at Klarysew, Odolanow, and Pustomyty. A great headquarters building was purchased in Warsaw which was made the center of educational, evangelistic, and social service activities. An English night school was opened in this building and soon had an enrollment of 1,500 students drawn from the choicest circles of Polish life. Evangelistic meetings were held in Warsaw and other cities, and by the spring of 1922 our superintendent in Poland reported that a group of 100 had applied for membership in the Methodist Church in Warsaw, in Lwow the head of the department of mathematics in the University had, with his entire family, declared allegiance to the Methodist faith and established a family altar, more than a dozen groups in as many different cities had organized and invited our missionaries to come to them, and "the revival fires are burning from Danzig to Posen."

On August 24, 1922, only eighteen months after the inauguration of the Polish Relief Movement, Bishop W. B. Beauchamp formally organized and held the first session of the Poland-Danzig Mission at Warsaw, and the workers at that time reported two presiding elders' districts, nine charges, seven churches, five church buildings, 800 members, 150 probationers, seven Sunday schools with 800 pupils, four Epworth Leagues with 300 members, one Woman's Missionary Society with 50 members, 10 schools, and property valued at \$67,000. This represents a most remarkable growth in a brief period.

At a later date the dominant Church began the persecution of the Methodists and our numbers declined somewhat, but the Poland-Danzig Mission has made steady progress and is well established. Our work still centers largely among the boys. The school and orphanage at Klarysew is now one of the most notable institutions of Poland, and among the students has developed a Church and a company of boys who are in training to be Methodist preachers. In the great central building at Warsaw a remarkable piece of institutional work is carried on day and night. The Classical School for English is flourishing, with a thousand students in regular attendance, and the institution not only pays its own expenses but actually returns a profit each month. Four day schools are still operated in Warsaw and these have an enrollment of about 300 children. At Skolimow is our Methodist Health Home, a sanitarium and rest home for our workers and others who may be in need of its ministry.

In the north we have established a Church among the Germans in the free city of Danzig, while in Poland proper our Churches are located at Warsaw, Mokotow, Klarysew, Skolimow, Lwow, Poznan, Grudiaz, Chodziez, Odolanow, Czarnylas, Katowice, and Torun. In spite of difficulties and hardships more severe than any encountered elsewhere, the work of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, makes progress and exercises a wide influence in Poland, and with the proper support from the "home base" it will eventually become a mighty power for evangelization in that ancient country.

VII. Roman Persecution in Poland

The dominant Church on the continent of Europe is the Roman Catholic, and since the World War it has become unusually aggressive. It is an interesting fact that even in Protestant Germany, the home of the Reformation, every Prime Minister, save one, since the war has been a Roman Catholic, even though the Centrist Party, which is the Catholic Church in politics, is not the major party. Every ambassador from continental Europe to the United States is a Roman Catholic, and since the war Protestant England, for the first time in history, has sent a Catholic representative to Washington.

The Roman hierarchy has resented the presence of Methodists in Europe, and refers to our missionary work as "the Protestant invasion." Strenuous efforts have been made to oust the Methodist Episcopal Church from Italy, and the opposition has been centered on the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Poland. Although the Polish constitution specifically guarantees religious liberty, Catholicism has been able to use the machinery of government to seriously hinder our work.

After the need for physical relief work had been greatly reduced an order was issued "extinguishing the legal existence" in Poland of "foreign humanitarian enterprises," and the government demanded that all Methodist work be closed within a specified time. A delay in execution was secured by an appeal to the State Department of the United States government, and in the meantime our mission work was organized on a commercial basis under the name of the Southern Trading Company and our property was transferred to this corporation.

The organization of the Southern Trading Company automatically transferred our interests from the oversight of the Ministry of Religion and Education to that of the Min-

istry of the Interior. The minister did not rescind the ouster order but "recommended" to the authorities that they "place no difficulties in the way of the work taken over by the Southern Trading Company from the Methodist Mission, under the conditions that this work will be carried on strictly according to the regulations."

In open defiance of this "recommendation" of the Ministry of the Interior and the Constitution of Poland, the provincial police, accompanied by Roman Catholic priests, raided our Methodist orphanage at Odolanow, forcibly removed fifty-two Polish orphans, and distributed them among private Catholic homes. The boys remained in these homes one night. The next day fifty of them escaped and returned of their own volition to the orphanage.

Following this high-handed measure, Bishop Beauchamp decided to appeal to the League of Nations for the protection of minorities in Poland. Our own government could give no protection because it is not a member of the League. But by invoking the aid of the Continuation Committee of the Ecumenical Methodist Conference, representing all Methodism, the case was laid before the British Foreign Office and by that office transmitted to the League of Nations. The appeal is still in the hands of the Committee on Minorities of the League, and on this account the Polish government has shown a more conciliatory attitude toward our work.

In one case, however, a high-handed measure instigated by the Catholic hierarchy was successful. In October, 1922, we purchased for cash, from a Senator in the Polish Parliament, property for an orphanage at Pustomyty. It was called Beauchamp Home, and sheltered a large number of Polish children. The government authorities refused to recognize our title to

the property and ordered us to sell it within a specified time on pain of confiscation. The property in question contained forty-three acres, and the basis of the order of dispossession was a law that no benevolent institution could own more than forty acres in any one place. The Government firmly refused to allow the Church to either sell or give away the extra three acres and insisted that the Methodists must give up the entire property.

The Methodists were accused of political designs and slandered by the subservient press. Spies were sent to our services and the peasants were instigated to hate our people. One poor mother in desperation offered her little son to the priest, who refused to care for the lad. The weeping woman declared the boy would starve, and the priest replied that "boys were plentiful in Poland." Then the desperate mother brought her son to the Methodist orphanage, and for this action she was excommunicated by the same priest.

In the end the hierarchy triumphed and our Church was forced to sell Beauchamp Home. Most of the orphans were carried to our homes at Odolanow and Klarysew and others were sent to France.

The transfer of our property from the Methodist Mission to the Southern Trading Company protected our holdings but did not remove the obstructions to our work. Our activity is still classed as a "foreign humanitarian enterprise," the existence of which is "legally extinguished" until we can secure recognition as a Church from the Ministry of Religion and Education. This recognition is being withheld on the ground that there is no law under which a non-Roman denomination may operate. Attorneys have rendered opinions, however, that the whole matter is covered by the constitutional guarantee of religious liberty and, therefore, no enabling act is necessary, and the plea of the

government seems to be nullified by the fact that the Greek, Russian, and Armenian Churches are working in Poland with their full hierarchical organization.

While this recognition is being refused the Polish government has resurrected and applied to the Methodists an ancient law of Catholic Austria, designed to prevent Protestant evangelism, which provides that Protestant organizations can minister only to their "constituency" or actual membership. Every person who attends a service must hold a membership card, and the police can enter any service and eject all who do not have such cards. Priests and policemen actually did this at Czarnylas, closing our Church and forbidding our meetings.

Under these restrictions evangelism is practically impossible. Progress has been made, however, by calling our Churches "assembly rooms" and working in connection with our schools. But our educational work is greatly hampered by a law which provides that superintendents of schools must be native Poles holding government permits to teach. Since most native Poles are Catholics and the Church frequently influences the issuance of permits, it is extremely difficult to secure teachers who can stress the evangelistic element.

"Methodist work in Poland is being systematically hindered and its recognition deferred by certain subtle influences which operate locally to create trouble where none exists and which endeavor to influence government authorities to withhold from our Church either provisional or definite recognition," declared our Executive Committee in Poland. "All this is in spite of the constitutional rights guaranteed to Polish citizens by the constitution with respect to religious associations and of the sacred rights of freedom of speech and legal assembly granted to all men in every civilized country in the world."

VIII. Miracles of Grace in Poland

In spite of the persecution visited upon Methodist efforts in Poland, the gospel has already achieved some signal triumphs and the very quality of our work has sometimes forced concessions from the reluctant "powers that be." Our Classical School for English, for example, has secured a charter from the government and is recognized as one of the leading institutions of Warsaw. When the Polish government was selecting students to send abroad for advanced study the applicants were sent to our Classical School for examination in English.

A miracle of grace which has exerted a far-reaching influence in Poland was the conversion of Wladyslaw Dropiowski. This remarkable man was the director of a noted "gymnasium" or boy's preparatory school in Lwow. He was one of the most distinguished educators in the country, a powerful orator, and a member of an aristocratic family. All his life Director Dropiowski had been a faithful son of the Roman Catholic Church.

During the war this man casually read some religious pamphlets which American Protestant relief agencies had translated. Though familiar with much literature, he had never read such thoughts before. Conviction, repentance, regeneration, personal salvation—he had never heard of these ideas. He could not have heard of them, for there are no words in the Polish tongue to express such conceptions.

Impressed by the things he had read, Dropiowski began to search the Scriptures for himself, and at last sought the advice of our missionary, Rev. Thomas J. Gamble, who had just arrived in Lwow. Gamble was perfectly familiar with the things about which Dropiowski was wholly ignorant, and before many days he had guided the educator into a wonderful experience of personal salvation.

Director Dropiowski went at once to the Roman Catholic archbishop and informed this prelate that he was leaving Rome forever. As usual in such cases, the priest threatened him with the flames of eternal damnation. "Your Grace," he replied, "I have been hearing you speak for more than twenty years, and you gave me no personal touch with God. Last night a greater Voice spoke to my heart, and I shall obey."

The Director hastened to Warsaw to receive baptism and instruction from Bishop Beauchamp and to offer himself for service. His coming was providential, for the whole Mission had been praying for a superintendent of the Methodist school and orphanage at Klarysew—though they scarcely hoped that a man so noted and experienced would appear. The Bishop asked Director Dropiowski to accept the post at a salary of \$1,000 per year. He accepted the offer on the spot, although his salary from the government was three times as large and in three more years he would have received a pension for life.

Today Director Dropiowski superintends Klarysew and conducts what Bishop Beauchamp calls "the most religious school I ever saw." Already he has organized a Church and has been responsible for the conversion of nearly all of his students and has a class of boys in training for the ministry. Each Sabbath he preaches in the new chapel, with five hundred people inside and as many pressing around the building outside. All the villages in a radius of a dozen miles are represented. Some of the rich and cultured—atheists and Catholics—motor each week from Warsaw to hear his burning words of eloquence. This new preacher is electrifying his country. We may not know what triumphs God may achieve through him.

The name of a new Polish orator who speaks only of Jesus has spread throughout Poland. Recently Senator Wlasow, one of the representatives of the Province of Little White Russia, which is now included in the Polish Republic, visited Klarysew to interview Dropiowski relative to placing his two boys in the school as students. Sunday after Sunday the senator returned to hear Dropiowski preach. Then he brought other members of the Parliament of Poland. These also became interested, for the message which this new convert was declaring was new to them.

This small group of statesmen from Little White Russia formed a study class and invited Director Dropiowski to visit them. Then they requested that the Methodist teachings be furnished them in print so that they might read and study them.

Eventually the group came back to Klarysew. "We have heard you preach," said their spokesman to Dropiowski, "we have read what you have said, and we have studied the teachings of the Methodist Church. We want you and the Methodist missionaries to come to Little White Russia and preach to our people the same things that we have heard and read, for we know that they are true and will be the salvation of our nation."

This group of distinguished leaders of the Province of Little White Russia drew up and signed a petition, which they placed in the hands of Bishop Beauchamp, pleading that the Methodists come with Dropiowski's message to declare it to the two and a half million people of their country. This document is a Macedonian call to Methodism as clear and imperative as that which was heard by St. Paul. It was signed by thirty-seven statesmen of Little White Russia and reads as follows:

"For a long time there has been an increasing conviction of the need of a reformation of spiritual life among us if ever our nation is to rise out of its present position. We need the Gospel as the foundation of our national life. We want teaching founded on Holy Scripture and not a religion materialized into ceremonies and adoration of relics.

"Our people are waiting and longing for light. Their hearts are empty and hungry to be filled with intellectual and spiritual food. We therefore turn to you, sir, and to the great Methodist Church you represent and ask you to come to our aid. Bring us the pure Word of Life, without which no nation or individual can become what God wants them to be. We will help you all we can."

These people have offered to give our Church an old castle in which Napoleon had his headquarters during his invasion of Russia. They will provide lumber and stone to remodel this castle. They will furnish labor. They have also agreed to give as much land as the Church can use.

When Director Dropiowski visited Little White Russia, Senator Wlasow personally accompanied him about the province and rallied the people everywhere to hear his message. The Senator insisted that his own young son be baptized as a Methodist.

The province of Little White Russia has arranged to send the entire teaching force of the public schools to Klarysew to be trained in the Bible by Director Dropiowski and thus equipped to teach the sacred book to their own pupils. These teachers will be sent in groups. The first company has already been sent, and they have forwarded to Bishop Beauchamp a most remarkable document of gratitude. Thus God has opened for Methodism a door of great service among a needy people.

IX. The Land of John Huss

Out of the debris of the World War emerged the nation of Czechoslovakia as an entirely new political entity; no such country had ever existed before, although various units incorporated in it had previously enjoyed independent existence. The new nation is made up of provinces included in the old Austro-Hungarian Empire, Bohemia, Moravia, Silesia, and Slovakia, to which was added a section of Sub-Carpathian Russia, called Ruthenia. The country lies at the exact center of Europe and is about the size of our State of Illinois.

The Czechoslovaks are two branches of the same Slav nation, the Czechs of Bohemia, Moravia, and Silesia, who speak Czech, and the Slovaks of Slovakia, who speak a dialect of Czech. Other elements are found inhabiting the territory, however; out of a population of a little more than thirteen and a half million, less than nine million are Czechoslovaks; there are three million Germans, 750,000 Magyars, 460,000 Ruthenians, 75,000 Poles, 180,000 Jews, and 240,000 aliens.

Among these elements, especially among the Czechoslovaks, Magyars, and Germans, cordial hatred prevails, this sentiment having its roots in history. Austria-Hungary was never a nation; it was simply an aggregation of diverse and hostile peoples held together by suppression and force. German and Magyar influence predominated and systematically endeavored to uproot and eliminate every trace of Czech and Slovak culture, and as a result the Germans and Magyars incurred the deep and bitter enmity of the Slavs.

Rev. J. L. Neill, superintendent of the Methodist Mission in Czechoslovakia writes thus: "My wife spoke fairly good German when we went to central Europe, but she did not know a word of any Slavic language. Knowing that everyone understood German perfectly

she naturally used that language in the shops. If the shop-keepers were Czechs they refused to wait on her. I am driving near the old city of Carlsbad, where nearly all the people are Germans, and ask a man, in German, if the road leads to Carlsbad. He whirls on his heel and refuses to speak—he is a Czech. Three hundred yards away I meet another man who looks exactly like the first, and, remembering my late experience, I inquire the way to Karlovy Vary, the old Slavic name for Carlsbad, but this man is a German, and with anger inexpressible he walks away without replying.”

Czechoslovakia is one of the richest countries of Europe in natural resources and industrial development. This nation, therefore, seems destined to become a leader in the economic life of Europe; each year it has showed a favorable trade balance, its exports being far in excess of its imports.

Czechoslovakia has the distinction of being the real home of Protestantism, although it is far from being a Protestant country today. Bohemia, formerly an independent nation, produced John Huss, “the protomartyr of the Reformation,” who started a Protestant Reformation and was burned at the stake by the Roman Catholic Church at Constance in 1415, seventy-five years before Martin Luther was born. When Luther’s Reformation began in Germany, there were already 400 Protestant Churches and 200,000 Protestant Church members in Moravia and Bohemia.

In 1526, the Hapsburgs were elected to the throne of Bohemia, which thus became united with Austria and Hungary. Immediately the Jesuits were established in Bohemia and the persecution of Protestants began. For many years the struggle between Bohemian culture and liberty and Roman Catholic autocracy went on, and the Czechs in 1618 revolted in an attempt to regain their liberty. In the war

that followed Protestantism was virtually wiped out; the Bohemian population was reduced from 3,000,000 to only 800,000. The remnant lost all rights. From the fateful Battle of White Mountain in 1620 to the beginning of the World War was a long nightmare for the unhappy Czechs. Jesuitism destroyed their literature, suppressed their schools, stamped out their religion, discarded their language, and robbed them of freedom.

When the World War broke out the passion for liberty flamed anew in the hearts of the Czechs. Some of their national leaders went into exile, the greatest of them, Prof. Thomas G. Masaryk, coming to America to labor for the cause of Czech independence. The people were forced to fight for Austria, but their hearts were always with the Allies. They at last formed a division to fight with Russia on the eastern front, and these troops carried a banner bearing the picture of John Huss, their great religious leader.

Independence for Czechoslovakia was proclaimed not in Europe but in America, and this announcement had a tremendous influence on contemporary history. On October 28, 1918, the nation came officially into existence; the National Council on that day took over the government of the Czechoslovak countries and the dissolution of the ancient and tyrannical empire of old Franz Josef of Hapsburg was an accomplished fact. On November 18th the National Assembly met in Prague, formally established the Czechoslovak Republic, and elected Dr. Masaryk the first president.

The Constitution of the new nation was adopted on February 29, 1920. It provides for a government composed of a President, Prime Minister, and sixteen other Ministers. The Parliament has a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, and a peculiarity of the system provides that only the

Chamber, which is more representative of all the people, can compel the resignation of the ministry by an adverse vote, and a measure passed by the Chamber becomes law, despite an adverse vote of the Senate, if the Chamber then adheres to its first decision by an absolute majority of all its members. In these regards Czechoslovakia is the most democratic country in the world.

The Czechs are an educated and cultured people. There are practically no illiterates except in Slovakia. The great Czech University of Prague, founded in 1348, is one of the world's great institutions of learning and has nearly 9,000 students. There is also a German University of Prague, with 3,500 students, a Czech University of Brno, and a Slovak University of Bratislava. Rev. J. L. Neill says: "I once received an enthusiastic letter from a lady in America stating that her son had volunteered as a medical missionary and expected to join me in central Europe. When this letter arrived there was in my home as a dinner guest, Dr. Sneed, of the medical faculty of the University of Missouri, who was a graduate student in the University of Prague, equipping himself to better teach modern medical science in America. We do not need American physicians and surgeons in Czechoslovakia."

The needs of this new nation are spiritual. There are now ten million Roman Catholics in Czechoslovakia, and only one million Protestants. But the liberated people are turning away from Rome and, as we shall see, a mighty Protestant revival is sweeping the land. The reformed clergy in 1920, repudiated the Pope and threw off his jurisdiction; they founded a Czechoslovak Church which after only four years numbers more than half a million adherents. The homeland of Huss is ready for the gospel in its purity.

X. Methodism and the Czechs

It is eminently fitting that Methodism should render its service in Czechoslovakia, the ancient home of the Moravian Christians, because these Moravians were in reality responsible for the birth of Methodism as an evangelical force. As a result of John Huss' Reformation in Bohemia and Moravia, a Church or association based upon Protestant principles was established in 1457, and in spite of drastic measures intended to suppress it, this Church spread in Bohemia, Moravia, and Poland until it became an evangelical power. When the German Reformation began in 1517 the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren numbered 200,000 and had 400 places of worship.

Immediately after the Czechs were defeated at the battle of White Mountain in 1620, Ferdinand II inaugurated a systematic persecution of this Church. Many of its members were murdered and thousands were driven into exile. The Moravians were excluded from the terms of toleration made to other evangelical parties in the Treaty of Westphalia, which ended the Thirty Years War in 1648, and thus it was permanently crushed.

In 1722 a little company of refugees from Moravia were given an asylum by Count Zinzendorf, the famous German religious leader and founder of the Society of United Brethren, on his estate in Saxony. These Moravians began a settlement called Herrnhut, which received other kindred spirits and gradually grew into a strong organization.

In 1734 Moravian missionaries from Herrnhut came to America and established a mission to the Indians at Savannah, Georgia. It will be recalled that John Wesley, who had not yet become a Methodist, was in Savannah, Georgia, from 1735 to 1737 and he there came in contact with these Moravians.

On the ship returning to England John Wesley was surprised to observe that the Moravians on board were at perfect ease in the midst of a storm, and in conversation with them he became dissatisfied with his own religious experience and felt a longing for a religion which would give him perfect assurance and confidence in the midst of danger.

After reaching London Mr. Wesley continued his relations with the Moravians and attended some of their services. Methodism as a spiritual and evangelical force was born in one of these gatherings. On one evening in May, 1738, in the little room in Aldersgate Street, Mr. Wesley "felt his heart strangely warmed" and underwent the notable experience which transformed him from a formal priest in the Church of England to a flaming evangelist and the founder of Methodism. Wesley visited Herrnhut and made a close study of the Moravian message and organization, and the influence of these godly people in the formation of early Methodism was very great.

In view of this history the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, welcomed an opportunity to serve Czechoslovakia, which was one of the nations allocated to us in the division of European territory between the two great branches of American Methodism. The Centenary delegation in 1920 surveyed the ground and launched the beginnings of Methodist missionary activity. It was found that with the coming of independence the people were deserting the Roman Catholic Church in multitudes and it was easily apparent that an evangelistic campaign would bear much fruit among them. There was also a pressing need for relief work similar to that which was carried on in Poland, and to this immediate necessity the Church directed its first efforts. While the need was not so great nor the relief work so extensive in Czechoslovakia as in Poland, nevertheless great

good was accomplished and an approach to the hearts of the people effectively made.

Two branches of relief work were established in Prague in 1920. The first was among the students of the University of Prague, who were very greatly suffering. A large building near the university was secured for a relief kitchen and here for a considerable period our Church gave meals to 110 Ukranian and 50 Russian students. These were young men of great promise who had been driven out of Russia in the Bolshevik wars and found their way to Prague in the hope of continuing their studies. The students constitute a distinct and influential class in central Europe and the service we rendered to these men won their confidence and gave us an excellent approach to the university. Building on the foundation thus laid our work has made a decided progress in the intellectual life of this new nation.

The second relief enterprise was among Russian refugees. The Bolshevik Revolution and the wars between Poland and the Red armies devastated the Russian and Polish borders and caused untold suffering among the people. By multiplied thousands they trudged into Prague, where they lay upon the streets and were the prey of famine and disease. Our representatives found 25 people, 12 women and 13 children, living in one room eighteen feet square and using this space as kitchen, dining room, laundry, and bed-room. Relief kitchens were established for these refugees and they were fed daily. Many lives were saved through this ministry.

At that time only one preacher in our Church was able to speak the Czech language. Rev. Josef Dobes was working among the Czechs in Texas, and he was immediately dispatched to Czechoslovakia to begin

evangelistic work. Rev. C. T. Collyer, a veteran missionary who had seen service in many fields, was also sent. Brother Dobes plunged at once into his work and with two helpers went from town to town conducting old-fashioned Methodist revivals. The result was remarkable, for people flocked to his services in great numbers and readily accepted his message, thus beginning the great Czech revival which is still in progress. In one of his first meetings, which continued for six weeks, there were 700 professions of faith.

Brother Collyer preached in English in the old historic Church of St. Martin's-In-the-Wall in Prague, the use of which was granted us, and soon developed a congregation of 300. His constituency was drawn from English and American residents in Prague and the large number of Czech leaders who understood the English language. He also had charge of Bible distribution and succeeded in scattering many thousand copies of the Bible among the people.

It was apparent that a great revival was impending in Czechoslovakia, and in the spring of 1921 the Board of Missions sent Dr. O. E. Goddard to conduct an evangelistic campaign during July and August. Later Dr. Walt Holcomb and Dr. Luther Bridges, general evangelists, were sent and their meetings gave a great impetus to the work under way.

In 1921 Rev. J. C. Bartak, another native Czech, was sent to Prague to take charge of the Church developing in that city. A building was secured and Vrsovice Church has become one of the largest Southern Methodist Churches in the world, having a membership at the present time of nearly 3,000. The rapid growth of this Church is indicative of the success which has attended our efforts in that country.

In the meantime property was acquired for Methodist headquarters at Prague. A great central building was purchased and therein were established the administrative offices of the mission, a regular Church, headquarters for colportage and literature distribution, and the Biblical Seminary. This seminary was founded to meet the need for trained preachers who could speak to the people in their own language. Within a year after our work began about twenty young men, converted in our revival meetings, were called to the ministry and entered the seminary for training. In Vrsovice Church seven laymen were licensed as exhorters and these, as well as Sunday school and lay workers generally, received their training in our new school.

In August, 1922, the Czechoslovak Mission was formally organized by Bishop Beauchamp, the first session being held in Prague. At this meeting the reports showed that the Church had already established twenty-six pastoral charges and had won approximately 6,000 adherents. It is doubtful if the whole history of Christian missions shows a record of success comparable to these two years of evangelism in Czechoslovakia.

When the second session of the mission was held on September 29, 1923, the reports showed a well-organized mission in complete operation. The territory had been divided into four presiding elders' districts, North and West Bohemia, under Josef Dobes, Central and South Bohemia, superintended by J. C. Bartak, Trebon and Moravian, under Vaclav Vancura, a native, and the Slovensko under D. P. Melson. In each of these districts Methodist work has been going forward by leaps and bounds.

On its second birthday the mission officially adopted its quota for the Superannuate Endowment Fund being raised

in the Church at home, thus evidencing its solidarity with world-wide Southern Methodism. The reports showed that five woman's missionary societies had been organized with 203 members, while five Epworth Leagues were operating with 105 members. In the 23 Sunday schools 1,700 pupils were enrolled. At this time the number of actual Church members was placed at 1,551, but 5,575 other persons were applicants for membership and were enrolled in the congregations and preparatory training classes.

This brief survey of the beginning of Methodist work in Czechoslovakia reveals the possibilities of this new Mission. Indeed it presents to our Church a phenomenal opportunity, limited only by the number of workers we are able to maintain. Czechoslovakia is blazing with spiritual fervor. All ancient ecclesiastical alignments have been broken and the people are seeking permanent spiritual moorings. Here as nowhere else on earth we have a chance to take a whole nation for Protestantism, and if an adequate support is given during the next few years our Church will write its most glorious chapter of missionary and evangelistic history.

XI. The Czechoslovak Revival

In the previous chapter we have indicated that a great revival is in progress in Czechoslovakia. That is true, and it is a fact of tremendous importance for Protestantism, and for Methodism especially. Here, as in no other mission field, we are able to give ourselves almost wholly to the original Methodist genius of evangelism. The need for physical relief has largely subsided. The need for an educational and medical ministry does not exist. The great lack is an adequate religion, and therefore Methodist policy centers in evangelism.

The roots of the Czech revival are in history. The overwhelming majority of the people are registered as Roman Catholics, yet the informed among them know that Rome has always been an enemy of Czech national and racial life. It was a Catholic power which enslaved them. It was Jesuitism which crushed their religion, language, and Slavic culture. Among many of the most intelligent Czechs, therefore, there has long existed a feeling that Roman Catholicism is identical with their worst foe and that antagonism to it is necessary to the highest patriotism.

Under Magyar domination nothing could be done, but when liberty had been achieved the stage was set for a general abandonment of the form of religion which had been forced upon them. "Loose from Rome," became the general watch-cry of a nation-wide and well-organized movement which sought to enlist the support of the people in an absolute break with Catholicism. Great meetings were held with thousands in attendance. The ancient spirit and ideals of John Huss swept like a wave over the country and a most remarkable stirring of the heart occurred. As the "Loose from Rome" movement gained impetus a large section of the Catholic clergy joined it and repudiated all allegiance to the Pope and the See of Rome, taking fully

half a million people with them into a new Czechoslovak Church. So enthused were the Czechs that it became necessary to establish booths on the streets to accommodate the thousands who wished to record their break with Roman Catholicism. This was perhaps the most remarkable evangelical demonstration of modern times.

This movement had a historical and political basis, it is true, but an impelling motive was also the preaching of the ancient message of John Huss and the Protestant gospel. Many did indeed record their break with Rome as an act of patriotism without any unusual change of heart, and to them it signified a change of sympathy and allegiance rather than conversion. But thousands were genuinely converted, and the whole movement created an ideal atmosphere for Protestant evangelism.

Our Methodist representatives were in the midst of this movement. Arriving on the scene just as the first stirrings were felt, they plunged into it heartily. Existing Protestant bodies were weak and uninfluential, and the American preachers alone were able to present the Gospel with a clearness and confidence born of a certainty of its power and a long acquaintance with its dynamic manifestation. The people heard gladly. In one official meeting of the "Loose from Rome" movement Rev. C. T. Collyer sold seven hundred copies of the Bible.

In the midst of this interesting development the Methodist evangelistic campaign was launched. Our preachers went through the country conducting revivals just as they would have been conducted in America. In the absence of buildings tents were used, and these tabernacle meetings, an innovation in Czechoslovakia, attracted wide attention. Everywhere the crowds overflowed the tents.

The Czechs are a musical people, and congregational singing was featured. It is related that the Roman Catholic priest in one city was alarmed at the interest of the people in these strange meetings and became convinced that they were drawn by the charm of the singing. One night the hymn-books mysteriously disappeared from the tent, and soon public announcement was made that a service of congregational singing would be held at the Catholic Church. Some Protestants attended and they reported that the Methodist hymns had been altered to suit Catholic theology, and the attempts of the priests and people to sing them were ludicrous in the extreme.

The first meeting was held in Prague in August, 1920. The tent seated 700 but people were turned away the third day. In three weeks 200 persons were converted and 150 of them became members of the Methodist Church thus established. In September this tent was moved to Vrsovice, a suburb, and here 2,000 people stood inside or around the tent to hear the message of Rev. Josef Dobes; here there were 500 conversions and 370 applications for membership, all from the Catholic population. This was the beginning of our great Vrsovice Church, over the door of which is the inscription, "Modlitebna Cirkve Metodisticke," which means, "The House of Prayer of the Methodist Church."

Mrs. Josef Dobes, herself an evangelist of power, relates this story: "One day I spoke against idolatry and images, and I closed by saying, 'If you love your Saviour with all your heart and want to follow him, bring me these images.' To my surprise an enormous basket full of madonnas, crucifixes, and pictures were brought to the tent. Today we have a 'museum' filled with these relics, given up by people who since childhood had bowed and prayed to them."

At Lomnice, Trebon, Straz, and other places the revivals were remarkably successful and left substantial Churches in their wake. These new converts, with apostolic zeal, themselves became evangelists and carried the gospel to the neighboring villages; the Methodists of Trebon were responsible for the evangelization of Lomnice, and from Lomnice the message then spread to five nearby communities, thus forming a circuit. From Straz the gospel was carried to seven villages, and when, owing to business depression and consequent removals, the Church at Straz suffered a setback, the Methodists from these villages preserved the circuit intact.

Naturally this movement incurred the displeasure of the Roman clergy, who threw every obstacle in the way. Special emissaries were sent and local priests were instructed to prevent the progress of Methodism; the Bishop of Budejovice, for example, ordered a Jesuit priest to Straz to curtail the growth of Methodism there, and he hindered the work perceptibly until forced to leave because of immorality. The priests derided the Methodists, referred to the tents as "pig stys," ridiculed the humble meeting places wherein the converts worshipped, and not infrequently resorted to actual persecution of the Methodists.

The revival in Czechoslovakia still continues unabated and Methodism grows apace, outstripping the progress being made in any other field. Here is the missionary marvel of modern times. Though only three years old, our Czechoslovak Mission is already stronger in membership than four Annual Conferences in the United States and stronger than any foreign Conference or mission save China and Korea. Rev. J. L. Neill, the superintendent, predicts that in ten years we will have a Czechoslovak Annual Conference as strong as some of the best Conferences at home.

XII. Stories from Czechoslovakia

The Methodists of Czechslovakia are possessed of an intense zeal and a glowing religious faith. A convert at Trebon prevailed upon Rev. Vaclav Vancura to attempt a revival at Lomnice, in spite of the fact that many persons regarded this town as impervious to the Methodist message. A tent was set up and the people responded in large numbers, 50 applications for membership being received the first week and 318 by the end of the month. Members of the Trebon Church daily walked a two hours' journey to sing and assist in the revival.

Here the Methodists met much opposition at the hands of the local priest, who persistently derided the meeting, contemptuously referred to the tent as a "pig-stall," and even punished the children for attending the Methodist services. "This opposition," said the preacher, "greatly strengthened our work, as the behaviour of the priest was far from Christ-like and the people noticed the difference between him and the Methodists. The priest punished the children for going to our tent and threatened them with eternal fire in hell if they continued to visit our service. The children, however, came, and to our inquiry if they were not afraid, they answered with the most mischievous sparkle in their eyes: 'O, no; we do not believe a word he said.' A twelve-year-old girl was beaten by the priest because she would not stay in the school for religious instruction given by him, and this treatment turned the parents against him and sent them to the tent daily."

The mother of the child who was beaten addressed the following interesting letter to the priest:

"Dear Father Confessor: First of all, accept my friendly greetings, for I am not an enemy, but a friend and sister in Christ. Why, O Father Confessor, do you not uphold the truth, you who call yourself a servant of God? Why do you with profane language

talk against our tent, calling it a pig-stall? Even if it be a pig-stall, we hear the true Gospel of Christ, and to us it is a holy place; even Christ was born in a manger. If you build beautiful palaces for us and adorn them with gold and precious stones, spreading falsehood and superstition, we will not go there, but will run from them. You have no right, sir, to force our children to attend your religious instruction classes. We are free citizens of a free Republic, and we will not allow ourselves to be forced in any way. Your hatred and anger against us is in vain, and they cannot overthrow the truth. Sir, we forgive you your ignoble words. Perhaps you were not fully aware of what you have said. May God also forgive you. Come and convince yourself, and listen to what is being preached to us in our tent, a place so dear to our hearts. We will not look upon you as an enemy, but as a soul hungering and thirsting for righteousness.”

In this same town the people wept when the tent was taken away. No other meeting place was available. The group of converts at last found an old cow-shed in the heart of the city, transformed it into a chapel, and had an attendance of more than 400 at the first service. In this place the work of grace has continued, although several, threatened with loss of work, deserted and returned to Rome. In one service two men, convicted of sin, came forward and publicly confessed to the crime of murder. It is said that a certain prison guard and his wife sing the Methodist songs every morning to the prisoners and distribute Christian literature through the jail.

At Trebon an evangelistic meeting won 290 members for the Church, but the machinations of the opposition long prevented the converts from obtaining a place of worship. The city hall was closed, the use of the school was refused,

and at last the group rented, for one service a day, a badly reputed dance hall, which became the occasion of much contempt and ridicule. "The anti-Methodist forces," wrote the pastor, "laid destructive mines in the city hall, and even in some other evangelical Churches." Several attempts to secure a lot were frustrated. One unusually desirable lot was the property of an influential man who had declared that he would give a large estate to drive the Methodists from Trebon. The Church then asked the State Expropriation Committee, in charge of land distribution, to secure the lot for them. This was done, to the delight of the Methodists and to the rage of their enemies.

The Trebon group has evangelized many neighboring towns. "An urgent call for help came from a nearby village where much propaganda was being done by the Roman Catholic 'Eagles,' " quaintly writes the pastor. "Our people, fifty-four in number, went with their pastor. Never before had Trebon seen such a procession like ours when going to Domanin. Ninety-seven Christians went with the conviction that Domanin must be won for Christ. News came that our Roman Catholic friends were ready to beat us out of town. But they, having seen such an array of Christians, changed their minds, and the pastor, surrounded by the soldiers of the cross, testified with joy that every one can be saved in His name. In like manner several of the villages were visited. Two hundred people were added to our Trebon congregation, so that we have four hundred and ninety members."

Reports from the Czech preachers read like modern Acts of the Apostles. The following story from the Church at Straz is full of interest:

"The congregation was eight members strong, and it seemed that Straz was not the place for a Christian strong-

hold. The local priests preached against us from the pulpit, charging us with anti-Czechoslovak propaganda, Bolshevism, and saying we were spies for American capitalism. After six months of hard work our small group of devoted souls grew to 136 members, which represented ten per cent of the entire population. The Roman Catholic Church became alarmed. The Bishop of Budejovice ordered a Jesuit priest to Straz to curtail the growth of Methodism. After a short 'hocus-pocus' campaign against us he was forced to leave Straz for reasons of immortality, and Methodism found itself freed from the prince of darkness.

"In the summer months this congregation went out faithfully every day to preach and to sing in the near-by villages. It was not an easy task, as these people knew nothing, except the Roman Catholic fables and infidelity. The power of Christ's truth spread over the whole region like great winds, and the people began to publicly acknowledge their sins and to seek God. The evangelistic campaign conducted in Straz and in the near-by villages lasted five weeks and doubled our Straz congregation, so that at the end of this campaign we had 220 applicants."

One of the most interesting contributions to religious literature imaginable has recently been issued by the Roman Catholics of Czechoslovakia. It is entitled, "Methodists; Historical and Religious Essay About Their Origin, History, Doctrine, and Efforts," by one Vaclav Oliva. The volume is intended for circulation among the Czechs as Catholic and anti-Methodist propaganda, and purports to be a true history of Methodism and description of Methodist teachings and polity. It is indeed a curious document, a few quotations from which should prove illuminating:

"American Methodism offers a very disconsolate picture. It has a great deal of money and many material

means, but inwardly it is all torn to pieces, so that there are almost no two Methodist stations, or two Methodist neighbors, who believe one thing and who live according to the same moral rules. Chaos, religious chaos, and moral-dogmatic revolution, these are the most suitable words by which American Methodism may be termed. It is, therefore, no wonder that under the sheltering wings of Methodism everybody and anybody may take refuge, whether he has any religious conviction or not, or whether he looks upon things seriously or not. Free-mason, anarchist, communist, revolutionary, and a 'believing' Methodist go hand in hand. Methodism does not request much from them. It is quite sufficient if the person in question has the subjective conviction that he has been saved, if he is a good man, and hates the Roman Catholic Church. In the American Methodist Church everybody has his own subjective God and his subjective religion."

"They have not so far tried to form their doctrines into a certain and firm system, nor issue any officially brief survey of their doctrines. They usually mitigate and in the real sense of the word 'de-Christianize' everything that the Roman Catholic Church and Christianity teaches, as, for instance, the doctrine of inherited sins, etc."

"From all these doctrines we can see both the Methodist way of preaching as well as their moral doctrines. Because, according to Methodists, the chief things in the life of every man is his conversion or awakening, which is usually brought about through the Word of God, each sermon should be such as to captivate the listeners, so that they may forget everything that is around them and immediately give a proof that they understand the Word of God, that is, Methodists insist that there should be a visible, almost material, awakening of those who 'sleep.' In order to reach this, the Method-

ist preachers describe very fantastically the torture in hell, make a great turmoil, have long and many songs, and say long, penetrating, and shocking prayers, whereby their listeners usually get quite stupified and lose their clearness of mind and self-consciousness. In consequence, all present feel the burden of their sins and their hearts are filled with fear of hell. That is also the most suitable moment for them to confess their sins. As soon as that happens, the dread of hell is wiped off with glad shouts, describing the heavenly bliss and the grace of God."

"Finally, the Methodist doctrines are governed chiefly by the ten commandments of God and the Church commandments, which are many and various in various communities and many more than any other Church has. It is also interesting that Methodism does not lay chief stress, like other Protestants, on faith, but on the keeping of commandments."

"Baptism is administered by immersion."

"Quarterly love feasts are held in prayer halls and conducted by the pastor. As a proof of brotherly love, they pass around bread and water for everybody to taste. Water is offered because the use of alcohol is forbidden with some Methodists, further, because the use of alcohol might lead some people to drunkenness and, finally, because in America they have general prohibition. Otherwise, there are places where alcohol is not forbidden, even at love feasts."

In view of the fact that Methodist revivals are being featured in Czechoslovakia, this author, quoting what he calls Protestant sources, dwells at length on the American revival, which is described as follows:

"As soon as I entered their camp the preacher was describing in a very dramatic, horrible way the destruction of the soul in hell, illustrating it with a state-

ment that the souls turn into horrible toads living in mud and hearing from above the words, 'Forever and forever.' I did not understand anything more, for the whole scene suddenly changed. The horrible dream was changed suddenly into reality. The groaning of the poor wretched sinful toads was horrible and sounded dreadfully like the groans of all devils. The whole congregation became a real picture of hell. Women, like ripe pears, were falling down from the mourners' benches, and were rolling on the ground, as if their conscience had caused them a great stomach ache. In all corners were shouting, howling, whispering, writhing, penitent souls. With thundering voices, growling and whimpering, they called to God for mercy. They rolled on the ground with clenched teeth, with foam coming from their mouths, begging for grace. Some of them were suddenly jumping from the ground, as if they had been bitten by poisonous snakes, and immediately afterwards were falling on their knees with groans. Others staggered from side to side, or quite out of breath were gasping for fresh air. The shouting and noise grew stronger and stronger. There was not a single animal note that had not been imitated there. Besides, the expressions on the faces of all present, their movements of arms and bodies, quite represented hell in its greatest chaos. In a word, it was such a scene that one would think—please excuse the expression—that one had suddenly come among drunken and mad devils."

The writer, however, pays Methodism this high tribute: "It took time and many experiences, good and bad, before Methodism became what it is today, namely, a real and serious enemy of the Roman Catholic Church, which no other Protestant Church can boast of."

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